> Steinbeck's humaneness and anger sometimes distorted his focus. Perhaps he sentimentalized the Okies and dealt too harshly with the owners. Perhaps he attributed the latters' conduct too much to hardness of heart and not enough to the iron necessities of the depression. But such considerations as this are not too important. (p. 162)

But "such considerations" are of the essence if Blake's thesis is to be tenable. One major flaw of the book is that it does not introduce and treat the "lukewarm truths" sufficiently to alter the novelists' treatment of their "hot truths." Blake is content to rest in the "Whats" of the novelists' "facts" because the "Whys" are submerged into his deterministic thesis, broader than any one author's. For many readers, therefore, Blake's discounting of individual novelistic "judgments" may be resented. For one, I missed notice of the timeless mastery of the final act of Steinbeck's novel, the living generosity of Rose of Sharon. But I also appreciate Blake's own kind of nostalgic revival of "The Lost Paradise" which was America for many Americans yet living.

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